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ACTION NEA-07

INFO	LOG-02	COPY-01	ADS-02	INR-10	EUR-02	SS-00	CIAE-22
	DODE-00	H-01	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	HA-09	L-03
	PM-10	PA-02	CMB-01	ACDA-12	USIE-02	SP-02	SNP-21
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UNCLAS SECTION 21 OF 23 OTTAWA 08468

E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: PINR, PREL, PHUM, AF, UR, PK, CA

SUBJECT: CANADIAN JOURNALIST EXPOSES REALITY OF

- SOVIET TROOP WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN

REF: STATE 313955

1. FOLLOWING IS ARTICLE BY ILYA GEROL ON SOVIET TROOP WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN. ARTICLE IS DATED IN PESHAWAR, PAKISTAN, AND APPEARED IN THE OCTOBER 22 EDITION OF THE OTTAWA CITIZEN NEWSPAPER. GEROL IS AN OTTAWA-BASED COLUMNIST FOR THE CITIZEN AND IS WELL KNOWN TO EMBASSY.

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2. (FOLLOWING MATERIAL NOT FOR PUBLICATION: COPYRIGHT OTTAWA CITIZEN) BEGIN TEXT: (HEADLINE:) MINOR TROOP WITHDRAWAL CAMOUFLAGED NEW SOVIET DRIVE TO TAKE AFGHANISTAN.

- OVER THE WEEKEND, SEVEN MORE PATIENTS WERE BROUGHT TO THE AFGHAN SURGICAL HOSPITAL IN PESHAWAR, A CITY ON THE PAKISTANI SIDE OF THE BORDER WITH AFGHANISTAN. FIVE OF THEM WERE CHILDREN. THE

YOUNGEST, SIX YEARS OLD, HAD BURNS TO 80 PER CENT OF HIS SKIN. ASKED ABOUT HIS CONDITION, A PAKISTANI DOCTOR COMMENTED, "EVEN ALLAH CANNOT SAVE HIM."

- A FEW HUNDRED KILOMETERS AWAY, IN CENTRAL AFGHANISTAN, THE DAY THE CHILD WAS BURNED BY NAPALM WAS

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MARKED BY FESTIVITIES. FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS HAD BEEN GENEROUSLY INVITED TO KABUL BY THE SOVIET MILITARY COMMANDER TO ATTEND THE CEREMONY MARKING THE WIDELY-ANNOUNCED WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET MILITARY UNITS FROM AFGHANISTAN.

- A MILITARY ORCHESTRA PLAYED A MARCH ABOUT SOLDIERS RETURNING IN TRIUMPH TO THEIR MOTHERLAND. A POLITICAL OFFICER WAS DISTRIBUTING SHINY MEDALS. NAJIEULLAH, THE AFGHAN LEADER OF THE PARTY, MADE A SPEECH OF THANKS AND ASSURANCE THAT AFGHANISTAN WOULD NEVER FORGET THE ASSISTANCE IT HAS RECEIVED FROM THE SOVIET ARMY DURING THE SIX-YEAR WAR.

- NOT FAR FROM THE TROOP WITHDRAWAL CEREMONY - 70 KILOMETERS EAST OF KABUL - THE LARGEST MILITARY AIRPORT EVER BUILT BY THE SOVIETS ABROAD WELCOMED 50 CARGO PLANES LOADED WITH FRESH SOLDIERS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT. THE NEW, MOBILE ANTI-GUERRILLA UNITS HAD

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ARRIVED IN AFGHANISTAN TO REPLACE THE DEPARTING TROOPS.

- I WAS WITH PAKISTANI PRIME MINISTER MOHAMMED KHAUN JUNEJO WHEN HE RECEIVED CONFIRMATION THAT AT LEAST 15,000 WELL-TRAINED SOVIET TROOPS HAD ARRIVED IN AFGHANISTAN AT THE SAME TIME AS THE USSR WAS PUBLICIZING THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOME OF ITS SOLDIERS.

- ACCORDING TO PAKISTANI OFFICIALS AND MUJAHEDDEEN LEADERS WITH WHOM I SPOKE, ONLY 4,000 TRCCPS, FROM THE

LEAST IMPORTANT SOVIET UNITS, WERE SENT HOME THIS WEEK. ONE OF THESE UNITS - THE 1,500-STRONG ANTI-AIRCRAFT REGIMENT - WAS ACTUALLY NEVER NEEDED; THE MUJAHEDDEEN REBELS HAVE NEVER HAD ANY AIRCRAFT.

- WHILE THE PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN CONTINUES OVER THE SOVIET WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN, RUSSIAN COMMANDERS ARE LAUNCHING A WIDE OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE BADLY-EQUIPPED AND POORLY-ORGANIZED MUJAHEDDEEN. ALMOST 2,000 RESISTANCE FIGHTERS HAVE BEEN KILLED IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS.

- THE FLOW OF REFUGEES, MEANWHILE, HAS INCREASED AS MORE VILLAGES ARE BURNED AND TOWNS BOMBED. FOR THE

FIRST TIME SINCE JULY, HOSPITALS IN PESHAWAR CAN'T ACCOMMODATE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE FLOCKING INTO PAKISTAN OVER THE AFGHANISTAN BORDER.

- U.S. MILITARY EXPERTS WHO ACCOMPANIED AMERICAN DEFENSE SECRETARY CASPAR WEINBERGER ON HIS VISIT TO PAKISTAN LAST WEEK, COMPARE THE MILITARY SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN TO THE FINAL STAGES OF THE VIETNAM WAR.

- "AT THAT TIME, WE HAD BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL MILITARILY, LAUNCHED ONE OFFENSIVE AFTER ANOTHER IN VIETNAM SO IT LOOKED ON THE BATTLEFIELD AS IF WE HAD

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BFEN WINNING THE WAR," ONE OF THEM SAID. "BUT
ACTUALLY, THE WAR WAS LOST BECAUSE OF THE POLITICAL
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UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 23 OTTAWA 08468

E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: PINR, PREL, PHUM, AF, UR, PK, CA

SUBJECT: CANADIAN JOURNALIST EXPOSES REALITY OF
PRESSURE FROM OUTSIDE AND THE UNLIMITED SUPPORT FOR THE
COMMUNISTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

- THREE-AND-A-HALF MILLION REFUGEES FROM
AFGHANISTAN, AND MANY WHO REMAIN IN THE COUNTRY MAKE UP
THE ENDLESS RESERVE THAT THE RESISTANCE CAN DRAW ON TO
CONTINUE THE CIVIL WAR.

- SUNDAY, I SAW A UNIT OF MUJAHEDDEEN RETURNING FROM
AFGHANISTAN TO THEIR CAMPS ON THE PAKISTANI SIDE. THEY
BELONGED TO THE NATIONAL ISLAMIC FRONT OF AFGHANISTAN.

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THE MOST SECULAR AND PROFESSIONAL GROUP IN THE
RESISTANCE, WHICH RECENTLY COMPLETED AN ATTACK ON
SOVIET INSTALLATIONS AND THE SOVIET EMBASSY BUILDING IN
KABUL. OUR MEETING TOOK PLACE ON A NARROW MOUNTAIN
ROAD ON THE AFGHAN SIDE OF THE BORDER, TERRITORY THE
MUJAHEDDEEN REFER TO AS THE LIBERATED AREA.

- "WE WERE FIGHTING IN KANDAGAR AFTER COMPLETING
OUR OPERATION IN KABUL," I WAS TOLD BY THE SENIOR
COMMANDER OF THE GROUP. THE SOVIET OFFENSIVE ON
KANDAGAR PUSHED US OUT FROM OUR BASE. THIS TIME IT
LOOKED AS IF THE RUSSIANS CAME TO KANDAGAR TO STAY.
BUT IN TWO WEEKS, THEY EXHAUSTED THEIR SUPPLIES AND
LEFT THE VALLEY. WE IMMEDIATELY MOVED BACK TO OUR

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BASES."

- THE MAJORITY OF MUJAHEDDEEN LEADERS DON'T HAVE ANY ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF WINNING THE WAR AGAINST THE SOVIET ARMY.

- "WE NEED ANTI-AIRCRAFT WEAPONS, ROCKETS AND VEHICLES," SAID TIR GILANI, LEADER OF THE NATIONAL ISLAMIC FRONT OF AFGHANISTAN. "I DON'T SAY THAT WE WILL LOSE THE WAR WITHOUT IT, BUT WE WILL CERTAINLY BE UNABLE TO KEEP THE LIBERATED AREAS IN OUR HANDS. WE STILL CONTROL 72 PER CENT OF THE TERRITORY, BUT IT WILL NOT LAST LONG."

- THE MUJAHEDDEEN ARE STARTING TO THINK ABOUT THE POLITICAL SOLUTION. SOME OF THEIR LEADERS ARE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE POLITICAL FORCES IN AFGHANISTAN PROVIDED THAT SOVIET TROOPS WITHDRAW FROM THE COUNTRY.

- THE SOVIETS, HOWEVER, ARE NOT GOING TO LEAVE. THEY BELIEVE THAT THEIR MILITARY MIGHT AND NEWLY-OBTAINED ABILITY TO CARRY OUT AN ANTI-GUERRILLA WAR WILL FORCE THE UNUNITED, UNDER-EQUIPPED AND

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UNEDUCATED MUJAHEDDEEN TO STOP THEIR RESISTANCE.

- YET IT HAS BECOME CLEAR EVEN TO THE SOVIETS - WHO HAVE NEVER UNDERSTOOD THE HISTORICAL REASONS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS BEHIND THE AFGHAN RESISTANCE - THAT AFGHANISTAN COULD NOT BE COMPLETELY SILENCED OR

PACIFIED BY MILITARY FORCE ONLY. IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE TOTAL MILITARY VICTORY, THE SOVIETS, ACCORDING TO SOME MILITARY EXPERTS, HAVE TO BRING 500,000 TROOPS TO AFGHANISTAN. THE SOVIETS CANNOT AFFORD THE LUXURY OF A FULL-SCALE WAR.

- THAT'S WHY THE NEW SOVIET TACTIC IS LONG-TERM: MORE BOMBARDMENTS OF VILLAGES AND TOWNS, WIDE ANTI-GUERRILLA OPERATIONS AND THE INCREASED EXPULSION OF THE POPULATION FROM THE WAR AREAS.

- "ONLY RECENTLY, WE WERE QUITE CLOSE TO THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF OUR TALKS WITH THE KABUL REGIME REPRESENTATIVE IN GENEVA," SAID PAKISTAN'S JUNJO DURING OUR CONVERSATION. "WE ASSUMED THAT AFTER PROVIDING THE SOVIETS WITH ALL POSSIBLE GUARANTEES OF OUR RESTRAINT AND GOOD INTENTIONS, THEY WOULD AGREE TO PROVIDE US WITH A TIME-TABLE FOR THEIR WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN IN AT LEAST A YEAR'S TIME."

- "SHORTLY BEFORE THE REYKJAVIK SUMMIT, THEY SUDDENLY ANNOUNCED IN GENEVA THAT THEY NEED FOUR YEARS OR MORE FOR SUCH A WITHDRAWAL. IT IS ABSOLUTELY UNACCEPTABLE TO US. THE SOVIETS KNOW IT, BUT CONTINUE TO INSIST - WHICH MEANS, I SUPPOSE, THAT THEIR INTENTIONS ARE TO STAY IN AFGHANISTAN RATHER THAN

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LEAVE."

- THE CURRENT "WITHDRAWAL" OF TROOPS WHILE OTHERS
ARRIVE CLANDESTINELY PROVES THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD
A POINT.

- THIS SHOW CONTINUES. A SMALL NUMBER OF SOLDIERS
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